

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 5, 16, 24, 41, 52, 60, 69, and 78 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph; claims 1-82 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; and claims 37, 45, 50, and 74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101. Applicants believe that the rejections have been overcome in view of the amendments and at least for the reasons as discussed below.

Applicants believe that support for the presently pending claims is fully provided in the specification. For example, the function for modifying the agent parameters is described as follows:

If the user operates the mouse 21D to click the post pet 103B on the GUI picture 100 of the "PostPet (Room)" by the pointing cursor 101 or acts on the keyboard 21C, the CPU 21a executes changes pre-defined in association with the contents of the operation to process the agent parameters determining the behavior of the post pet 103B. Specifically, the CPU processes the agent parameters responsive to the operating of caressing or hitting the post pet 103B by the operation of the mouse 21D. See, Specification, page 22, line 28 to page 23, line 2.

If a further post pet 103B is registered as an agent on the receiving side personal computer 22, the agent parameters of the post pet 103B are changed, on reception of the E-mail by the post head 103A sent from the personal computer 21, by the interaction with the post pet 103A performing the operation as determined by the agent parameters annexed to the E-mail. See, Specification, page 25, lines 4-9.

That is, as shown in FIG. 49, the feeling unit determining the post pet behavior captures changed values of environmental parameters of the post pet at step A, determines the behavior based on the changed environmental parameters at step B, judges the behavior taken at step C and modifies the value of the inner parameters at step D by way of performing event processing. See, Specification, page 27, lines 26-30.

[0198] The physical strength E3 or the vigor E4 of the post pet 103 is varied with the stimuli or the contents of experiences from the user or the counterpart. For example, the physical strength E3 of the post pet 103 is lowered and raised on dispatching an E-mail and on eating or sleeping. The vigor E4 of the post pet 103 is lowered and enhanced

on being persecuted and caressed by the counterpart, respectively. See, Specification, page 30, lines 1-7.

Therefore, the function for modifying the agent parameters based on the event generated or the action of the agent itself as shown above should be readily understood as the "learning function."

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit reconsideration of same.

If any fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Director is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818.

Respectfully submitted,

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